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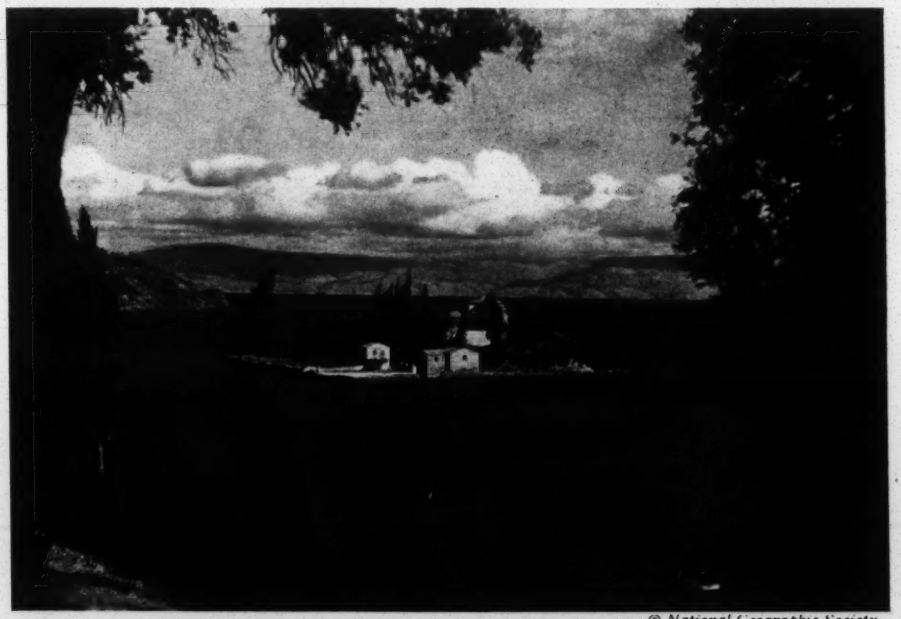

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A SAMPLE OF THE MANY ISLES OF GREECE

Just off the coast of Corfu, Pontikonisi offers a picturesque spectacle which reminded Homer of a ship: "Ha! Who stopped that swift ship as she was sailing in?" But to less poetic imaginations its neatness suggested the name "Mouse Island" (See Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Greece Dusts Off Her Throne

AFTER ten years of a republic which followed years of monarchy, Grecian leaders have invited a king to return. Plans have been made for a plebiscite to allow the citizens of Greece to express themselves on the proposed change in the form of their government.

Easternmost of European countries (save a fragment of Turkey) on the northern coast of the Mediterranean, Greece thrusts its southernmost tip farther south than the elongated Italian boot. Its myriad islands are generously sprinkled about the Ionian, Aegean, and Mediterranean Seas. If Great Britain can be called a land surrounded by many bodies of water, Greece can be described as a sea surrounded by many bodies of land.

Glory and Distress Are Heritage

Although Greece as a nation has existed only since the War of Independence (1821-29), the history of the country reaches back into ancient times, when it consisted of more than 150 separate states. Then it gave the world its first League of Nations, the Delian League, organized in 447 B.C. by way of mutual protection against the "external aggression" of Persia. Athens, as the principal power, influenced almost the entire civilized world. Then the military power of Greece died under the Roman yoke. But when the Eastern Empire was formed with Constantinople as its seat, Greek culture conquered where Greek arms could not, and Byzantium adopted many Greek traditions. During that time Greece was all but snuffed out territorially, while the blood of its people suffered dilution from the hordes of conquerors and immigrants of almost every nation of Europe—Albanians, Slavs, Teutons, Spanish, French, Venetians, Turks. In 1669 Turkey gained complete dominance over what had been Greece.

The turbulent war for independence, a hundred and fifty years later, enlisted the sympathy of many. Most famous of the foreigners who came to the aid of Greece was the poet, Lord Byron, in whose memory Athens has named a suburb and a boulevard. The fervor of American sympathy has been preserved in the name Ypsilanti, Michigan, in honor of a Greek patriot of the day.

A Century of Stormy Growth

When Prince Otho of Bavaria was crowned in 1829, as the first independent ruler of the nation, Greece occupied only 18,000 square miles of the southern extremity of the Balkan Peninsula, and the Cyclades and Sporades Islands in the Aegean Sea. The Kingdom of the Hellenes, as the monarchy was officially named, had five rulers, not one of whom served until his natural death or voluntary abdication. In 1925, two years after exiling King George II, the Greeks voted for a republican form of government.

Bit by bit continental areas and islands have been added to the Greek map through hard-fought wars and peaceful occupation. While the United States was struggling to maintain the Union, the Ionian Islands off the west coast of the peninsula, which had been a British protectorate, were ceded to Greece. At the end of the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) more than 20,000 additional square miles had been absorbed, including Macedonia and Epirus on the continent, and many Aegean islands as well as Crete, one of the most strategic areas in the eastern Mediterranean.

When the smoke of the World War cleared over Europe, Greece was occupy-

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RAVAGED BUT STILL REGAL

The Parthenon, originally a temple for the worship of Athena, has also served as a Byzantine church and a Turkish mosque. Eight columns, now restored to their original position, were overturned in the explosion when the Venetians blew up a Turkish powder magazine here in 1687, and then were used in Turkish bastions (See Bulletin No. 1).

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Canada Follows That Old Hellenic Custom: Voting

"ON TO OTTAWA!" said Canadian voters at the polls, and in one day of October elections designated the 245 representatives they wanted in the House of Commons. Thus smoothly—with much excitement, some expense, but no danger at all—a new administration was arranged, in accordance with the principle of popular self-government first extensively practiced by the ancient Greeks.

Such changes in government were not always effected peaceably in other ages. Egypt's dynasties rose and fell without a single "people's choice" or election speech. In old Assyria Semiramis became queen by cheating her infant son of the throne, in return for which he murdered her as soon as he was old enough to rule—only to be slain in turn by his successor. Thus rulers had been changed by daggers and not by the wishes of the people. Then came the civilization of Greece, and the development of peaceful democratic voting. Since that small beginning in the dim past, use of the popular ballot has spread until now the majority of the world's population is ruled under constitutions guaranteeing a choice in the government expressed by vote.

Candidate Wins by a Yell

Voting in ancient Sparta was a deafening procedure, for the voters, assembled in a public place, expressed their approval by the primitive method of shouting and banging spears against their shields. There, any man's vote was as good as his voice.

In Athens popular assemblies for voting were held from four to ten times a year in the Agora, or market-place, where the excited populace stood tensely listening, or circulated freely to discuss the issues of the day. Everyone was at liberty to ascend a platform elevating him above the crowd and express his views fully on the question under consideration, and when all the eloquence on the subject was exhausted, the vote was taken by a show of hands. Counting votes was a task of no small magnitude, as an attendance of six thousand was necessary for a quorum on many matters.

A different voting procedure was followed when, once a year, the question before the popular assembly was that of ostracism—the ten-year banishment of any individual considered a menace to the peace and progress of the community. Then each voter scratched the name of the person he considered undesirable on a piece of pottery which he deposited, unsigned, in an urn. Thus Greece acknowledged every man's right to express his opinion and, moreover, to express it secretly, guarding him from pressure from any who might disagree with his choice.

Bronze, Wood, and Wax Went to the Polls

The vote of a juryman was especially respected. He was supplied with two bronze round tablets, identical in every way except that one was pierced through the middle and the other was solid. If he held the ballot with a finger across the center, he could deposit whichever he liked in the "deciding urn" without publicly revealing his decision.

Roman conquerors preserved the Greek tradition of voting, practicing it by the procedure of division—those assenting to a public measure or candidate passing in one direction before a teller, those opposed in another. Later, however, they passed laws providing for secret balloting and used thin tablets of wood covered with wax on which they could scratch their preference with a stylus.

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ing many islands in the Aegean and Mediterranean formerly owned by Turkey, the Bulgarian Province of Western Thrace, and a part of Aidin Province in Asia Minor. The latter was held only until 1922 when it was retaken by Turkish forces under Mustapha Kemal. The republic to-day is about equal in area to the State of New York.

The Greeks are an agricultural people. About one-fifth of the area is tilled by ancient farming implements as well as the most modern implements imported from the United States. Many of the rural folk are employed in raising cattle, wheat, barley, maize, cotton, potatoes, and tobacco.

Olives that were so highly valued by the ancient Greeks are no less important to modern Greeks, who care for more than thirty million olive trees. Currant-growing, likewise an ancient industry, is still thriving.

The United States' chief import from Greece is, strange to say, Turkish tobacco. Refugees from Turkey, amounting to nearly a fifth of the country's population, have stimulated the raising of the Near East's small leaf tobacco in Macedonia. They have also introduced the silk-raising industry and rug weaving.

In recent decades the smoke of industry has been increasing in Greece, but more generally in the cities. For many years after the War of Independence, Athens and Piraeus remained small, miserable villages. Industry has made them modern cities to-day. Soap, textile, tobacco, and candle factories employ a large part of the workers of Athens' half million and Piraeus' quarter million inhabitants.

Note: Students preparing project work on Greece should consult the following: "New Greece, the Centenarian, Forges Ahead," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1930; "Seeing 3,000 Years of History in Four Hours," December, 1928; "History's Greatest Trek," November, 1925; "The Glory That Was Greece," December, 1922; "The New Map of Europe" and "The Whirlpool of the Balkans," February, 1921; "The Hoary Monasteries of Mt. Athos" and "Saloniki," September, 1916; also "Greece of Today," October, 1915.

Bulletin No. 1, November 4, 1935.

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SEVEN SURVIVORS OF CORINTHIAN SPLENDOR

The original beauty of this temple to Apollo was in keeping with the luxury of ancient Corinth. This important and wealthy city was well fortified against invaders by the citadel on the hill in the background, but had no defense against the earthquakes which contributed to its destruction. These columns are examples of the Doric style of architecture.

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Paraná River on Its Annual Rampage

CANADA has its Kicking Horse River; Argentina has the Paraná, which lives up to the Canadian name. When spring comes to Argentina, the beautiful tropical river gathers up melting snow and seasonal rains throughout its drainage area, nearly as extensive as that of the Mississippi, and surges turbulently down to the delta region where it tears down islands and builds up new ones.

The Paraná River helps three countries define their boundaries, flowing south between Brazil and Paraguay, then south and east between Paraguay and Argentina.

During the flood season it rushes through Santa Fé province as much as four feet higher than normally, and it has been known to inundate large inhabited islands in front of Rosario. Deposits from its 2,700-mile course form a treacherously shifting delta which is the sailor's terror, where it joins the Uruguay River and pours into the estuary of the Rio de la Plata. The Paraná surpasses the Mississippi proper in length and discharge, and its annual flow is five times that of the Nile. Indeed, it is a worthy southern sister to the Amazon.

Marshy Islands across the River's Mouth

A trip up this beautiful, eccentric stream would start from Buenos Aires most probably on a side-wheel, twelve-foot-draft steamer. Land is out of sight for hours in the turbid, muddy Plata, until the confluence of the Uruguay and Paraná Rivers is reached.

The Paraná is miles wide, the color of coffee with cream, and broken by numberless marshy islands. The shores are covered with plantations of poplar and willow.

The second day of the trip would bring the boat to Rosario, the second largest city of Argentina and a notable shipping point for grain and flaxseed. It is located on high clay bluffs west of the river, along whose banks there lie huge grain warehouses and elevators which cut off the view of the city proper, with its 250,000 people, a large part of whom are Italians. The water beside the Rosario docks is deep enough for ocean freighters, and the city serves as port of outlet for a great agricultural section.

About sunset, imposing white stuccoed church towers come into sight ahead, and rounding a great bend the steamer reaches Paraná, capital of the province of Entre Rios. This town of approximately 70,000 people exports large amounts of hides and cereals. Its wharves are equipped with traveling cranes and backed by solidly built concrete warehouses.

"Floating Islands" a Menace

The character of the country traversed on the third day changes. On each side stretch endless reaches of low, partially inundated country, densely wooded with strange tropical trees, interspersed with an occasional "feather-duster" palm. The wide flood is dotted with islands, large and small, among which the buoyed channel meanders. *Camalotes,* which Spanish dictionaries define as "river plants in South America resembling a floating island," begin to drift by. Occasionally the boat must swing abruptly aside to avoid patches which collect about some floating uprooted tree to form islands fifty feet across.

These *camalotes* make their appearance in times of high water, being carried out into the current from the adjacent swamps. They always harbor many snakes.

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Voting during the middle ages was restricted to a small privileged minority, such as the electoral college of barons which designated the German king and the Venetian electors who were chosen by lot to elect the Doge. It was in England that the popular assembly revived, first in the informal Anglo-Saxon shire-moot where the freemen of a locality assembled to discuss civil affairs, and later in the thirteenth century beginnings of Parliament.

New England colonists established the tradition of the public meeting in the New World. Viva voce voting prevailed until Massachusetts instituted the use of ballots, for which the voter himself provided miscellaneous scraps of paper. The secret ballot, inaugurated by Australia in 1856, has now become so completely accepted that an election was once contested because voting booths left the voters' feet visible!

Now voters can enjoy such improvements as printed ballots or mechanical and electrical voting machines. Extending the franchise to all social classes as well as to women, imposing penalties on non-voters, and declaring legal holidays on election days are some of the recent developments of the custom which, in the main, is the gift of Greece to democracy.

Note: The following issues of the *National Geographic Magazine* contain some brief references to voting: "Russia of the Hour," November, 1926; "Looking Down on Europe," March, 1925; "The Islands of Bermuda," January, 1922; and "Rumania and Its Rubicon," September, 1916.

Bulletin No. 2, November 4, 1935.

Photograph courtesy Royal Canadian Air Force

THE HOME OF A DEMOCRACY WITHIN AN EMPIRE

The Parliament Buildings at Ottawa, the city chosen by Queen Victoria in 1858 to be the capital of Canada, which then had only two of its present nine provinces. Here, after its origin in Newfoundland, developed the form of self-government now common to all British dominions. The original buildings were destroyed by fire in 1916.

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The Potato, Homely Prince of Vegetables

EFFORTS that now are being made to control the production of "Irish" potatoes, recall that even more strenuous efforts were once made to promote their growth.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Antoine Auguste Parmentier tried to popularize the potato in France by having his potato patch heavily guarded during the day, as if it were of infinite value, then removing the guards at night. In a very short time his stratagem was rewarded by a report that potatoes were being stolen by the poor. To introduce them among the rich, he served a banquet every dish of which was concocted from potatoes—even brandy and liqueurs—a banquet at which Benjamin Franklin was present.

The necessity for such a campaign seems almost incredible to-day, when half of the six million farms in the United States raise potatoes and 600,000 farms produce them for sale. In 1934 the United States crop exceeded three hundred million bushels, more than a hundred bushels for each acre planted. The value of this one crop alone is more than $180,000,000.

A Popular Newcomer in Europe

Yet Europe has succeeded in making even greater use of the tuber than the United States. It may be said to have created an agricultural revolution in northern Europe, where it became a dominant crop, even making it possible for a number of countries to sustain an increase in population. Now it is to that part of the world what rice is to the Orient. But for the potato Germany probably could not have remained in the Great War more than a year or two.

Stories of Sir Walter Raleigh's introducing the potato into England from Virginia have been flatly denied. It undoubtedly first came to Europe as food on Spanish ships, or possibly as a curiosity from the New World introduced by Spanish merchants who had grown rich selling a potato food preparation to laborers in Peruvian mines. Originally referred to as the "papa" or the "batata," it was first observed growing in the highlands of Peru, where pre-Incan farmers had cultivated it as a food staple because the climate was too cold for wheat or corn. There is a legend that Sir Francis Drake brought the new vegetable into England from Spain and another that Sir Walter Raleigh captured a Spanish vessel with potatoes aboard and thus came into possession of them.

A Naturalized Citizen of Ireland

Although several Englishmen claimed the honor of having introduced the potato into Ireland, none could support his claim beyond dispute, and it is not known definitely who is responsible. It was already being cultivated there, however, in 1663 when a dearth of food brought it into prominence, and led to its acquiring its first name—"Irish." A pamphlet published in 1664 declares that "these roots . . . prosper well in Ireland, where there are whole fields of them, from whence they have been brought into Wales and the north parts of England, where they likewise prosper and increase exceedingly." They were still scorned, for another publication in the same year advises: "Plant potatoes in February in your worst ground." But the popularity of this "apple of the earth" grew with a rush when its virtues became known.

One of the outstanding advantages of the potato which have made it a leading

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Once a great flood brought so many of these "islands" down the river that they stranded on the banks near Buenos Aires and thus constituted a public menace. Thousands of snakes, with an occasional wild boar or other animal which had become marooned, went ashore into the thickets between Palermo Park and the river, and a large force of policemen armed with machetes had to be put to work killing them.

The fourth day of the journey brings the traveler to the territory of the Chaco, its largely unexplored swamps and jungles covering an area of at least 200,000 square miles, in northern Argentina, western Paraguay, and southwestern Bolivia. Were it not for the *quebracho,* that tree which is so important a source of tannin, the region would be even less known than it is.

In the forenoon the boat reaches Corrientes, capital of the province of the same name. It is a typically Spanish-looking, sleepy old place, with its one-storied white-washed brick homes showing only blank walls to the narrow, filthy cobbled streets.

Note: Additional material and photographs about Argentina and the Paraná River can be found in the following: "Life on the Argentine Pampa," *National Geographic Magazine,* October, 1933; "Buenos Aires to Washington by Horse," February, 1929; "How Latin America Looks from the Air," October, 1927; "The World's Great Waterfalls," July, 1926; "Buenos Aires and Its River of Silver," October, 1921; and "The Awakening of Argentina and Chile," August, 1916.

Bulletin No. 3, November 4, 1935.

Photograph by Pierce G. Shaw

THE CATARACTS OF LA GUAYRA IN THE UPPER PARANÁ

The Paraná River, from its source in Brazil, progresses through falls and spectacular cataracts to Argentina, where for hundreds of miles above its mouth it is 25 to 30 miles wide. It flows through 100 miles of delta and empties into the Plata through fourteen channels, which have been changing their courses constantly since first found by Cabot in 1526.

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Mauritius Island May Become British Naval Base

MAURITIUS ISLAND, England's chief possession in the South Indian Ocean and strategic point on the route between South Africa and India, is being considered as a possible naval base for Great Britain. Interest in making use of the island in this way has been aroused by the naval activity in the waters of the Middle East in connection with the Italo-Ethiopian War. The island, about 716 square miles in area, is approximately 1,400 miles from the east coast of Africa and within four days steaming distance of ports used by Ethiopia.

Port Louis, largest town of the densely populated island of Mauritius, has an excellent harbor, protected at its entrance by two strongholds, Fort William and Fort George. This port, one of the finest in the Indian Ocean, is the only navigable and accessible approach to the island, which is surrounded by a chain of coral reefs.

Discovered in 1507 by the Portuguese

When the island was first discovered by the Portuguese in 1507 it was uninhabited. They made no permanent settlements, nor did The Netherlands, which took possession in 1598. The latter gave the island its present name, Mauritius, in honor of Count Maurice of Nassau. They deserted the island in 1710 after several futile attempts at colonization.

The French then took control and, renaming the island Ile de France, made a successful settlement at Port Louis. They introduced sugar planting as the principal industry and imported thousands of Africans to work the large plantations. The French also built roads, railways, and buildings, which are still used. The French language, laws, and customs also prevail to-day, although the island has been under British control since the Treaty of Paris in 1814. When the British took over the island, very little change was made, except that its old name "Mauritius" was restored.

Port Louis, melting pot of French, English, Indians, Africans, Chinese, Malays, and others, has been modernized by contact with the outside world. Regular steamship services and telegraphic and postal systems connect it with the principal cities of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Railways and motor highways bring it in constant touch with the main communities of the island. Port Louis is the seat of the government and business of Mauritius, but its most prosperous and prominent citizens live in the fashionable residential town of Curepipe, 1,800 feet above the sea and about fifteen miles from Port Louis. Commuting trains every morning carry Mauritian suburbanites to the heat of the city and in the evening back to the beautiful town in the highlands.

Mauritius Famed in Literature

July and August are the fashionable social months in Mauritius, as then the weather is at its best. In Port Louis a French opera company gives performances in the municipal theatre during these months, and balls and concerts are frequent forms of entertainment. Sports also have a prominent place at this time, and tennis, golf, football, cricket, and racing are popular. The Yacht Clubs hold annual regattas in Tombeau Bay and "La Chasse," or deer hunting, holds sway as the favorite national pastime.

Mauritius has been called the "garden spot" and "gem" of the Indian Ocean by writers; others have compared her beauties to the Riviera and the famed South Sea Islands. The tropical picturesqueness of the island is the background of the well-known French romantic novel, "Paul et Virginie," by Bernardin de St. Pierre, who lived on Mauritius three years as a government engineer. The Pamplemousses Botanical Garden in the district by that name has been made famous as the scene of the unhappy lovers' grave.

Mark Twain spent some time on the island and wrote afterward of its "ragged luxuriance of tropic vegetation, limpid streams, dense forests, and tiny mountains—quaint and picturesque groups of toy peaks."

Of volcanic origin, the island is very hilly, even mountainous along the coast. Two peaks form a rugged background to the harbor of Port Louis and guide ships to its entrance. The interior, the crater of a one-time volcano, was, until the arrival of the French on the island, covered with ebony and bamboo trees; it is now a fertile valley of sugar cane, cotton, and tobacco. A single peak, however, rises abruptly from the fertile plains in the center of the island. This peak is known as the Piton du Milieu de l'Ile.

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vegetable product is that it grows to perfection in regions too cool and too moist for satisfactory wheat culture. Another advantage is the tremendous amount of food material per acre contributed by potatoes. A hundred bushels per acre is an average yield in the United States, but in Germany the average yield is nearly twice as great. Under exceptionally favorable conditions a single acre has been known to produce 1155.8 bushels.

Now a Leading World Crop

As a world crop the potato, the upstart vegetable from the New World, has shouldered its way to a place with rice and wheat. Potatoes have won first place in the world in the matter of diffusion. They have become an important crop in the temperate and cool portions of every continent—from France to Scandinavia, in Siberia, the Americas, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand.

Potatoes are not alone a food vegetable. They already fill an important place in industry and promise to become more important in that field. Starch, flour, glucose, alcohol and cattle feeds are some of the important products made from potatoes. The starch finds an important function in the textile industries in sizing yarn and woven fabrics, and in thickening colors.

Note: Some pictures and text references about potatoes can be found in the following: "Maine, the Outpost State," *National Geographic Magazine*, May, 1935; "Florida—The Fountain of Youth," January, 1930; "A Tour in the English Fenland," May, 1929; "Twin Stars of Chile," February, 1929; "Sweden, Land of White Birch and White Coal," October, 1928; "Ireland, The Rock Whence I Was Hewn," March, 1927; "The Heart of Aymara Land," February, 1927; "Round About Bogotá," February, 1926; "Rediscovering the Rhine," July, 1925; "Struggling Poland," August, 1922; "The Orkneys and Shetlands," February, 1921; "Staircase Farms of the Ancients," May, 1916; and "How the World Is Fed," January, 1916.

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PUTTING POTATOES INTO THEIR WINTER HOME IN POLAND

Covered with straw and then with earth, this potato pile will be supplied with all winter comforts, even a chimney for ventilation, and in turn will supply a family with winter nourishment. Most of Poland's large crop is converted into alcohol.

The rainy season in Mauritius is, approximately, from January to mid-April, during which time the island is swept by severe wind storms accompanied by great downpours of rain. These hurricanes last for about eight hours at a time. In recent years, however, the storms have been less violent owing, it is thought, to the deforestation of the island and the resulting drier atmospheric conditions. This is one reason why England can now more safely establish a naval base at the island.

Products Grow in Tropical Profusion

The Mauritians are particularly successful in the raising of sugar cane and the production of sugar. In spite of heavy rainfall and wind during the wet season, over 200,000 tons are produced yearly in an area of about 138,000 acres. Many other tropical products are also being raised with success, such as cotton, tobacco, pineapples, tea, coconuts, and aloes. Although England receives the greatest amount of its goods, the island also trades with India, Burma, and South Africa.

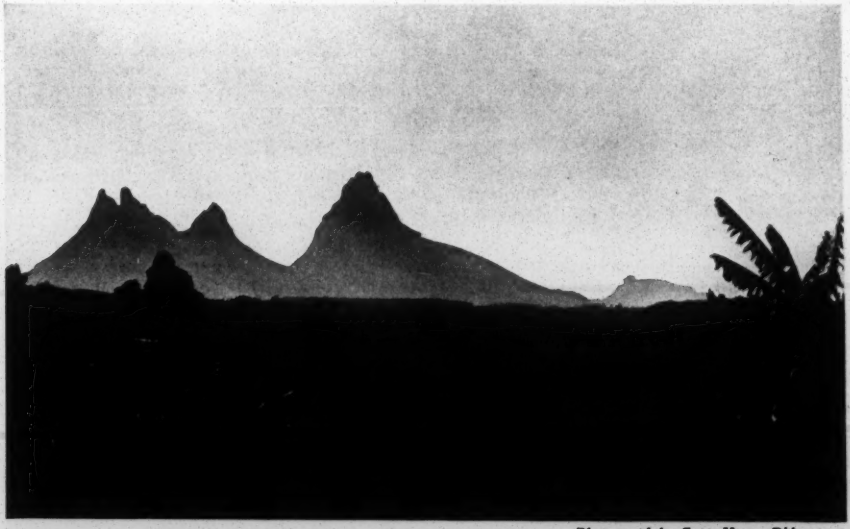
Because of the island's position in the Indian Ocean between Africa and India, and also because of the lack of any so-called "native" population, the inhabitants are chiefly Indians and Africans, together with some French and English who have come to Mauritius for governmental and business purposes. The most numerous element of the population, however, is Indian or of Indian extraction. There are no race restrictions in the civic rights of the island, ten members of the Council of Government being elected directly by the populace. The population is nearly 400,000.

Forming a part of the same colony and governed as dependencies, are a number of small islands scattered over many miles of the Indian Ocean, among them Rodriguez, the Chagos archipelago, and the St. Brandon islets.

Throughout this region it has been necessary to combat the ravages of such diseases as cholera and malarial fever, and recently the Mauritians have succeeded in reducing the death rate considerably.

Note: See also "Around the World in the 'Islander'," *National Geographic Magazine*, February, 1928; and "Geography and Some Explorers," March, 1924.

Bulletin No. 5, November 4, 1935.



Photograph by Capt. Harry Pidgeon

WHERE THE DODO USED TO LIVE

Mauritius, when discovered, was still the home of the Dodo. Fortunes have been made from the export of the island's black ebony trees alone. Coral reefs and hurricanes make navigation dangerous in its neighborhood. The fertile plain and ragged peaks in the picture are typical of Mauritian landscape.